

LEBANON
EU COUNTRY ROADMAP FOR
ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY
2014 - 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

As envisaged by the European Commission Communication “The Roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe’s engagement with Civil Society in external relations”, an EU Roadmap for engagement with Civil Society in Lebanon has been jointly elaborated by the European Union and the EU Member States. The Roadmap in Lebanon was adopted by the EU Heads of Missions in Beirut in October 2014.

The aim of the Roadmap is to identify the long-term objectives of the EU cooperation with local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and to develop a common strategic framework for the engagement of the EU with civil society at country level, as well as to improve the impact, predictability and visibility of EU actions. The Roadmap also aims at improving local coordination among the EU and its Member States on the support provided to civil society organisation.

Lebanon has a vibrant, diverse and active civil society. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) represent a wide range of "voices" in development debates, particularly the vulnerable and marginalised population, while also taking responsibility for the delivery of services. They also constitute an integral part of the "demand-side of governance" with their claims on political accountability as well as transparency.

In spite of the liberal environment they encounter in Lebanon, especially when compared to other countries in the region, CSOs face legal, financial and political constraints.

2. PRIORITIES

On the basis of the analyses conducted of the state of CSO in Lebanon, the EU has established the following priorities:

PRIORITY 1: Refining EU coordination at the local level

The EU and MS will ensure internal coordination and enhance flow of information on support to CSOs in Lebanon to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity among all EU initiatives.

PRIORITY 2: Improving internal governance, sustainability and outreach of CSOs

The EU and MS will support efforts to scale up their impact through improving their internal systems, structure, and capacity and to develop/operationalise a Code of Conduct, and possible mechanisms to improve social accountability.

PRIORITY 3: enhancing CSOs' participation in policy dialogue and policy making processes

The EU and MS will support civil society organisations in Lebanon in their efforts to participate actively in formulation and implementation of sector development strategies/action plans that meet citizens' need, particularly those of vulnerable groups.

PRIORITY 4: fostering CSOs' participation policy making for citizens' basic needs (health, education, water, energy and environment) is fostered

The EU and MS will support development of CSOs' role as development actors through enhancing joint work with local for broad-based democratic ownership of development policies and processes as well as for inclusive and sustainable growth.